

Religious Heritage and Tourism

How to increase religious heritage tourism in a changing society

5-7 October 2016,

Utrecht, The Netherlands

Never before have so many people reached so many places and immersed in such a diverse range of cultures, traditions and faiths. Among the many motivations for travelling, visiting religious sites ranks high on traveller's wish lists. However knowledge about our religious past and heritage is limited, travels to religious heritage sites are immensely popular. The number of tourists annually visiting the world's most prominent religious sites is increasing greatly.

People visit religious heritage sites for various reasons: because of their religious beliefs and backgrounds, because they are searching for inner peace or spiritual fulfilment or because they are interested in the cultural and historical aspects. Above all, religious heritage tourism connects people. It plays an important role in understanding each other, in understanding our shared past and our present-day society. Besides, religious heritage tourism is also a key contributor to our economy and adds to the attractiveness of our cities, villages and regions. Key issues that we want to explore and further develop in this two-day seminar are:

- *How can we further develop the social and economic impact of religious heritage tourism?*
- *How can we further develop religious heritage sites as tourist destinations?*
- *From which good practices can we learn to bring religious heritage tourism forward?*

In order to realize this we want to learn about the good practices, discuss possibilities and generate new ideas with creative personalities from outside the tourism sector. To make this seminar a success we have joined efforts between the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, the Museum Catharijneconvent, the Centre for Religious Art and Culture (Flanders) and Future for Religious Heritage. The conference will take place in the context of the Dutch Future for Religious Heritage Program.

Wednesday, 5 October 2016
Museum Catharijneconvent

Official Welcome Drinks (by invitation only)

Opening remarks by Ms. Marieke van Schijndel
Director of the Museum Catharijneconvent

Thursday, 6 October 2016
Dom Church

9:00 - 9:30	Registration
9:30 - 10:30	Opening Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Jan van Zanen Mayor of the City of Utrecht• Mrs. Jet Bussemaker Minister of Education, Culture and Science, the Netherlands• Mr. Axel Buyse Representative of the Government of Flanders in the Netherlands• Ms. Alicja Magdalena Herbowska Deputy Head of the Cabinet of Commissioner Navracsics, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport• Mr. Taleb Rifai Secretary-General of the United Nations World Tourism Organization
10:30 - 10:50	Keynote Speech: The Religious Aspect Mons. Timothy Verdon Director of the Diocesan Office of Sacred Art and Church Cultural Heritage in Florence, and Museo dell'Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore <i>Religious Heritage Tourism in an Art City: Florence and the Challenge of Communicating Meaning</i>
10:50 - 11:15	Keynote Speech: The Social Aspect Mr. Loyd Grossman TV presenter and Vice-President of the Churches Conservation Trust and Chairman of the Heritage Alliance
11:15 - 11:35	Address and closing remarks by H.E. Mr. Nabi Avci Minister of Culture and Tourism, Turkey

11:35 - 12:00	Coffee Break
12:00 - 13:15	<p>Forum Discussion</p> <p><i>The social and economic impact of religious heritage tourism: How to advance it?</i></p> <p>For ages sacred buildings and places have played an important social and economic role in local communities. They bring people together and offer the possibility of sustainable growth to local economies. Nowadays, religious tourism could fulfil this role.</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Eugenio van Maanen Senior Lecturer at the Academy for Tourism, Breda, The Netherlands</p>
<p>Mr. Stefano Dominioni, Director of the European Institute of Cultural Routes and Executive Secretary of the Enlarged Partial agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe <i>'Cultural routes and religious heritage tourism'</i></p> <p>Mr. Crispin Truman, CEO of the Churches Conservation Trust <i>'How to involve the local community? An example: Gateway Churches'</i></p> <p>Mr. Paulo Fonseca, Mayor of Ourém <i>'Fátima, Portugal'</i></p> <p>Ms. Rasa Rasa Noreikiene, Vice-Minister of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania <i>'Hill of Crosses'</i></p>	
13:15 - 14:30	Lunch at the Dom Church

14:30 - 15:45

Parallel Sessions

Session 1: *The promotion of religious heritage in a changing society*

Despite the popularity of religious heritage tourism, in our changing society profound knowledge about sacred places is often lacking. How can religious communities and heritage organizations promote religious heritage in a better way, and how can we increase the level of understanding?

Moderator: Mr. Shahar Shilo

Historian and Jerusalem researcher

Ms. Hetty Berg

Chief Curator and Manager of Museum Affairs at the Jewish Historical Museum Amsterdam

'Educating young and old: innovative ways of involving visitors in the Jewish Cultural Quarter'

Mr. Lothar Casteleyn

Chief Curator and Manager of Museum Affairs at the Jewish Historical Museum Amsterdam

'Using new digital means to highlight the hidden treasures in monumental churches: the case Xplore Bruges and St. James's Church'

Ms. Maria Gravari-Barbas

Director of Equipe interdisciplinaire de recherches sur le tourisme (EISEST), Sorbonne University

'Reinvent the pilgrimage tourism destinations in the 21st century'

Ms. Anya Niewierra

General Director of the Tourist Board South Limburg, The Netherlands

Mr. Szymon Gatlik

Chief specialist in tourism marketing, Promotion and Tourism Department, Municipality of Krakow, Poland

Session 2: Religious heritage sites and tourism: how to deal with conservation and management issues?

Tourist crowds at religious heritage sites are a major challenge. Not only the management of these crowds, but also the management of these precious buildings and sites can be incredibly difficult. New technology makes it possible to find effective and innovative solutions for sustainable management.

Moderator: Ms. Wantanee Suntikul (PhD)

Assistant Professor at the School of Hotel and Tourism Management,
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Mr. Peter Debrine

World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme, UNESCO

Mr. Benjamin Carey

Fellow of the Tourism Society, Managing Director at Dunira Strategy Consultancy

Mr. İshak Kızılaslan

Expert of Religious Affairs, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Republic of Turkey: The Blue Mosque

Ms. Anne van Grevestein

Professor at the University of Amsterdam and former director of SRAL: The Ghent altarpiece in St Bavo Cathedral

16:00 - 17:30

Guided Tours of Utrecht

18:00 - 19:15

Free Time & Drinks in Paushuize

19:30 - 22:30

Dinner at Paushuize

Official Welcome by Marriette Pennarts

Deputy of a.o. Culture, heritage and Europe at the Province of Utrecht

Friday, 7 October 2016
Dom Church

10:00 - 10:20	<p>Keynote Speech: "Luther 2015 - an international campaign on the occasion of 500 years of Reformation"</p> <p>Ms. Michaela Klare Regional Manager Northwest Europe of the German National Tourist</p>
10:20 - 11:10	<p>Plenary Session <i>How to increase the interest of tourists in religious heritage in an innovative way</i></p> <p>Exploring new ways of promoting religious heritage is becoming increasingly relevant. In a changing society innovative ideas to promote religious heritage are very much needed. This is not only confined to tangible heritage but also to intangible heritage.</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Aziz Abu Sarah Emerging Explorer at National Geographic Society and Former Executive Director at the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution, George Mason University, USA</p>
<p>Mr. Christian Devos Director of Our Lady's Cathedral in Antwerp: Exhibition REUNIE</p> <p>Mr. Michael Hoare Treasurer of Future for Religious Heritage: Religiana online tool</p> <p>Ms. Boukje Schaap Project Leader of Museum Catharijneconvent: a new project: 'The Biggest Museum of the Netherlands'</p> <p>Ms. Silvia Aulet Serrallonga Teacher and Researcher at the Faculty of Tourism of the University of Girona, Spain: Spiritual Tourism</p> <p>Mr. Karel Werdler Fellow at London South Bank University: Dark Tourism and Religious Heritage</p> <p>Ms. Reham Samir Director of the Egyptian Tourist Office-Benelux: Flight of the Holy Family in Egypt</p>	
Q&A Session	
11:10 - 11:30	Break

11:30 - 12:40	<p>Workshops: Generating Creative Ideas for the Development of our Religious Sites</p> <p>Led by Philosopher Eveline Groot in cooperation with De Bildung Academie</p>
12:40 - 13:00	<p>Lecture on Religious Heritage Tourism in A Changing Society</p> <p>Mr. Paul Schnabel Former Director of The Netherlands Institute for Social Research</p>
13:00 - 13:15	<p>Concluding Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mr. Olivier de Rohan-Chabot President of Future for Religious Heritage ● Mr. Jan Klinckaert Director of Religious Cultural Heritage, CRKC Flanders ● Ms. Mirjam Blott Coordinator of Agenda Future Religious Heritage ● Mr. Peter Janech Regional Programme for Europe, UNWTO
13:15	<p>Organ Concert</p> <p>Jan Hage</p>

END OF CONFERENCE